

The Library Assistant

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS
(SECTION OF THE LIBRARY
:: :: ASSOCIATION) :: ::

HON. EDITOR: J. F. W. BRYON
BECKENHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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Centenary Credo

SINCE men first recorded their thoughts, libraries have been necessary. Whatever the form taken by the records—manuscript, print, film, sound recording or their successors, they will need to be collected, arranged and indexed for use. The conception of a library develops as successive technical adaptations improve the form in which communications are made permanent: we organise for the benefit of the community which employs us, not books and periodicals, but facts and ideas. It is our duty to ensure that they are available and that they may be found; herein lies the justification for the disciplinary techniques of librarianship—bibliography, classification and cataloguing.

In a community where all may vote, all may have opinions, which should be based on facts. It is important, therefore, in a democratic community that access to all the relevant facts should be without restriction. It is equally so that each should be free to explain his opinions to others, transmit his ideas. It is upon this count above all that retrograde regimes have been indictable; their persuasion has been, not by logical conviction, but by suppression and distortion. To the extent that urban and county authorities in Britain have stored and made accessible the facts and ideas which should be available, they have fulfilled their obligations to an adult democracy, which to-day can rely upon no other agency for an equally constant, comprehensive and permanently available supply.

Librarians know the truth of this: educationists are becoming increasingly aware of its validity. The distinguished contributors who have responded to our invitation to acknowledge the place and function of libraries in the community, and whose messages are printed on succeeding pages, are witnesses to the degree in which libraries are now admitted to be essential to a full life, both communally and for individuals.

There are indications that, when universal secondary education has developed more widely the ability to discriminate, some of the public libraries' problems will be solved. They will no longer have as opponents, but as colleagues, those powerful agencies for public persuasion whose influence could be so great in the setting of ethical and aesthetic standards. Meanwhile, we celebrate the conclusion of one hundred years' beneficent activity and thank our well-wishers for their testimonials which, though solicited, are, we have no doubt, sincere. If these be for us . . . ?

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A Heritage for Humanity

H.R.H. PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

President of the Library Association, 1950.

It would be hard to say when in the world's history the first libraries were established, but in Great Britain it was in the first half of the nineteenth century that their value to the common man began to be widely realized. In 1850 the power given to local authorities to spend public money on the maintenance of Public Libraries recognized the principle that the fruits of men's minds are a heritage for all humanity. In the hundred years that have passed, public libraries have grown and developed to such an extent that they are an important and integral part of our social structure. Millions of people go to them regularly for factual information, for study and for recreation, and this progress is due jointly to the wisdom of Library Authorities and the devotion of librarians.

I congratulate you upon your achievements in the past and I wish you ever-growing success in the future.

A Treasure House of the Spirit

Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. GEOFFREY FISHER,

P.C., D.D., M.A.

Archbishop of Canterbury.

I am glad to send my greetings to *The Library Assistant* as it celebrates with a special issue the centenary of the first Public Libraries Act in Britain. I do so, in the first place, as one of the Trustees of the British Museum which contains the great national library of this country, of pre-eminent repute among the libraries of the world and one of the glories of Great Britain.

And secondly, I do so as a profound believer in the value of public libraries and in the great part which they have to play in the culture of the community. Man will never be able to live by books alone: he can as easily poison himself as feed himself from them. Like knowledge itself, he can turn books to his own destruction. And yet without books a man cannot enter into the rich treasures of the spirit of man.

We need books both to expand and to concentrate our vision—to have our eyes opened to the great range of fact and fancy which is within our reach, and to pursue some chosen field of knowledge with minute and loving care. In both we grow in imagination and understanding and become the better for it, if in all that we read we have a standard of judgment by which to measure all things. Indeed, reading is one of the ways by which we learn to distinguish firmly between the sincere and the shoddy, the cleverly misleading and the convincingly true, the trivial and good and the trivial and bad, the book that reveals truth and the book that projects the false. And thus it fortifies and deepens what we learn in life from studying the world of nature and of man around us. Life and libraries both do their full work for us when in both we discover that not man, but God is the measure of all things and that by His light we see light.

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Universities of the Common People

Rt. Hon. HERBERT MORRISON, P.C., M.P.

Lord President of the Council.

On the occasion of the Centenary of the first Public Libraries Act, I send my congratulations to the Association of Assistant Librarians.

I derived much benefit from the public libraries in my youth. Millions of other people have improved their education as a result of the facilities offered, or have improved their culture by borrowing and reading novels.

The public libraries were, for many of us who had not the benefits of university education, the universities of the common people.

Public libraries have a great record, and I wish you all well in the future of your work.

Community Service

Rt. Hon. GEORGE TOMLINSON, M.P.

Minister of Education.

On the occasion of the Centenary of the first Public Libraries Act in this country, I should like to send my good wishes and my appreciation of the great work which has been done, and is continuing to be done, by librarians up and down the country in the service of the community.

A National Asset

Rt. Hon. EDITH SUMMERSKILL, P.C., M.P.

Minister of National Insurance.

The days are long past when books were so rare that they were chained up, when education was for the privileged few and the woman who had the chance to read was uncommonly fortunate. We take it for granted now that many of our librarians and assistant librarians, whose expert knowledge and critical taste are at the disposal of the public, are women, and that women write a good proportion of the many new books appearing every year. The shackles have come off both books and minds in this country, but I think we should bear in mind, as we browse freely along the shelves from Aristophanes to Zola, that there are still places in the world where women are not taught to read on principle, in case they should "get ideas".

The knowledge that women have played an important part in building up our excellent and much-appreciated public library services gives me great satisfaction, both as a woman and as a member of a political party which believes in equality of opportunity for all. This service has played a vital part in helping people to get to know both the world they live in and themselves, and now has an integral place in the community, and in our own times, when we see ignorance of one another breeding intolerance, and intolerance, strife, I believe that public libraries form one of our most valuable national assets.

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity of offering my very best wishes to all those men and women who are engaged in this fine work.

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Adult Education's Main Source

**General SIR RONALD F. ADAM, Bt.,
G.C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.**

Chairman of the British Council, President of the National Institute of Adult Education, President of the Library Association, 1949.

This is a great year for librarians and book lovers. It is not only a time for taking stock of the past, but also for determining what we are going to do in the future.

My experience in the British Council has taught me to regard the book, after the direct human contact, as the most important Ambassador of Great Britain abroad. When travel is difficult, the book assumes an added importance.

Great Britain has every reason to be proud of her Public Library Service and, although we all wish to improve it and make it greater than it is, we can be proud of the interest that is being taken by the librarians overseas in our system and of their eagerness to come to this country and see for themselves how we run it.

We none of us as world citizens can, however, be proud of the obstacles that still remain in the way of customs duties, taxes, forms, etc., to prevent the free and rapid passage of books between countries, and until we have overcome these difficulties, we have none of us done our duty by the book.

At home, my experience, both in the Army and in the National Institute of Adult Education, has made me an advocate of the rapid expansion of adult education in Great Britain. I do not believe that it is yet sufficiently realised that, even when we have all the County Colleges built and the Community Centres in action for the majority of adults in this country the book and the periodical will still be the main source of education, supplemented by the radio and the film. The librarian is the tutor in this form of adult education. If we could only get this understood, many of the financial and other obstacles which now prevent librarians from doing this task to the full, would be rapidly swept away. The librarian would be recognised as an educator and we might increase our reading public to a figure of which we could be really proud.

I should like to wish, in conclusion, that all assistant librarians may live to see their dreams come true.

Aid to Scholarship

Professor E. N. da C. ANDRADE, F.R.S.

Director, The Royal Institution.

It is with considerable pleasure that I send a message of friendly greeting to the Association of Assistant Librarians on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the passing of the first Public Libraries Act. All those to whom learning is dear, whether it be the precise discipline of the sciences or the more subjective erudition of the arts, owe an immense debt to our young librarians, who go far beyond the bare obligations of their engage-

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ment to render active and accomplished aid to scholarship. These librarians appear to take a pride and pleasure in their enlightened and enlightening work, and to this interest is no doubt due the courtesy and efficiency to which I am glad to pay tribute.

Delight - Understanding - Discrimination

Rt. Hon. SIR NORMAN BIRKETT, P.C., K.C., M.A., LL.B.

President of the National Book League.

As President of the National Book League, I am glad to have the opportunity of paying a special tribute to the Public Libraries on the occasion of their hundredth anniversary. The growth in the number of libraries and the immense development in their usefulness have now become quite commonplace, and it is well to remember the small beginnings and the devoted service of the pioneers who had vision enough to plan for the future. The variety and richness of the treasures contained in books, the rare delight which they perpetually give, the understanding and insight which they bestow, the discrimination and taste they cultivate—all these things are made available through the Public Libraries. These things, too, become more valuable every day, not merely because the making of books has become more expensive and pockets somewhat emptier, but because of the immense increase in the reading public during the last decade. Many are discovering for the first time the wealth ready to hand in the field of letters, and finding that their lives are immeasurably enriched by the new experience. This centenary, therefore, is not merely a matter for warm congratulation, but may be the occasion also for the Public Libraries to dedicate themselves afresh to the great task in which they play so tremendous a part—that of bringing home to more and more people the inestimable value of books and the lasting joys they hold.

A Literary Nursery

H. E. BATES

Author.

More than half my education came from the shelves of the public library. There I browsed, groped, read and took first steps into the literary dark. Without it I should have had no easy access to literature, no means of forming for myself comparative standards of expression. It was my literary nursery.

Blessings of Fortunate Communities

EDMUND BLUNDEN, M.C., M.A., F.R.S.L.

Author and Poet.

It is excellent that *The Library Assistant* will commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the first Public Libraries Act. Every author, as such, will surely look on the occasion with gratitude, and every reader, too. As one with a liking for my own bookshelves, I nevertheless bless the Public

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Libraries and those who keep them going so unostentatiously and well for a great many benefits received. I mean naturally the benefits of better acquaintance with books, in the first place, but then we all know the contributions to culture in general which our Public Libraries make through their programmes.

To live for any length of time in places where Public Libraries do not exist, or are very few, is to become almost too well aware of their being one of the blessings of fortunate communities. Those who look back longingly to the past and its apparent felicities might ask themselves if they would have really enjoyed winter in some workaday town before the Public Library made its appearance.

I also, as many do, owe some precious and enlightening friendships to the chances which a Public Library is apt to give.

Success to your special number, and to the Bicentenary number which surely will follow at the proper interval.

"The Best for the Most"

IVOR BROWN

Author and Journalist.

Every one of us who can read is in everlasting debt as much to the distributors of books as to their authors and publishers. Without the general supply of great writing, the great writers would have been cheated of their purpose. There is no better slogan for the arts than "The Best for the Most." That is what Public Libraries have provided.

The Mental Wealth of the Ages

H. BULLOCK

President of the Trades Union Congress.

The Centenary of the first Public Libraries Act brings forcibly to mind the value of libraries to the community. They have done a marvellous job over the years, widening the horizons, deepening the lives and filling the minds of all who use them. The real mental wealth of the ages is there for all who wish to benefit from it.

In addition, for the manual and technical worker, the libraries provide up-to-date information and instruction manuals, whose value is incalculable. Every phase of our existence is catered for: one hopes that our people will never lose sight of these tremendous advantages, without which we should be poor indeed.

A Personal Tribute

WALTER DE LA MARE, C.H., Litt.D., LL.D.

Poet and Author.

It is a great pleasure to have been given this opportunity of saying how valuable it seems to me the Public Libraries have proved to be. Direct personal experience is, perhaps, the best evidence one can give. For many

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years I was a member of one or other of the Public Libraries—three or four in all, I think—and am thus able to realise fully the invaluable advantages that can be derived from them, both as Lending and Reference Libraries. It is difficult to express, too, how grateful I am for the help and courtesy I never failed to have given me by the Librarians and their assistants. May the Association always flourish.

Remedying Educational Defects

ERNEST GREEN, C.B.E., M.A., J.P.

Former General Secretary, Workers' Educational Association.

It still remains true, as Ruskin said in the 19th century, that the living word is the written word. The most eloquent speech can be nothing but an indistinct memory within a short period of its delivery, but the written word lives on, to bless generation after generation. If I were asked what had been the most potent force in the education of public opinion, I should unhesitatingly say the Public Library. It is true that the radio and the film have larger audiences, but the Public Library is the People's University. It is the storehouse of the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of all ages, and in celebrating the Centenary of the Public Libraries Act, *The Library Assistant* can proudly claim that the Public Libraries have in the past fifty years done more to make good the defects of educational neglect in the 19th century, than any other agency.

Partners in Education

SIR PHILIP MORRIS, C.B.E., M.A.

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol.

I am grateful to *The Library Assistant* for giving me this opportunity of sending a message of congratulations and good wishes to our Public Libraries on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of the passing of the Public Libraries Act. Perhaps more than most people, those of us who are closely concerned with education have reason to be thankful for our Public Libraries and for the imagination and devotion with which they are conducted.

It has been said, I think with some justice, that Public Library statistics form an index of the success of the educational system. The statement could also be reversed, for the truth is that these two great services, libraries and education, are to a large degree interdependent. The vast and increasingly discerning reading public which is served by libraries to-day may be accounted for by the provision of education for all and of higher education for a far greater number than ever before, but we should remember that this increase in the quantity and quality of education itself owes much to the stimulus and incentive given by the libraries.

Twenty years after the passing of the Public Libraries Act, came the Education Act of 1870, by which primary education for all was made obligatory. While both Acts probably sprang from the same underlying sources, there can be little doubt that the establishment of Public Libraries in many

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large towns helped to prepare public opinion for this further step forward. Further, when the schools had taught a whole generation of children to read, the public libraries, which gave these children opportunity and encouragement to read when their school days were over, helped to pave the way for a further advance, and the Education Act of 1902 was passed, providing for a public system of higher education. More recently, in the Education Act of 1944, the length and scope of secondary education were again increased, and these educational advances have been paralleled by corresponding advances in the library system, each making possible and being made possible by the other. Seldom can there have been closer or more fruitful co-operation than that between the Public Library and the Public Education systems during the past hundred years. It is therefore with particular pleasure that I take this opportunity of paying tribute to the work of libraries and librarians and of expressing the hope that our partnership may long continue to flourish.

A Force for Knowledge

SIR WILLIAM HALEY, K.C.M.G.

Director-General, British Broadcasting Corporation.

There can be very few people in the United Kingdom to-day who do not owe something to the public libraries. From the young and ardent, eager to embrace all knowledge, to the old and sedate, whose main purpose in reading is relaxation, there is a great range of humanity whom all those who work in public libraries can feel proud to serve.

It is a far cry from the days when the Bronte girls walked arm in arm down the hill to get their week's books from the Mechanics' Institute at Keighley. What was then the activity of advanced societies has now become the responsibility of the community as a whole. The resources have increased fantastically. The purpose remains the same.

The different forces of knowledge within the community can never be precisely assessed. But the public libraries have been and still are and will continue to be one of the greatest. For despite all innovations, new pastimes and counter attractions, reading retains its hold.

An Indispensable Factor

JULIAN HUXLEY, F.R.S., M.A., D.Sc.

Biologist and Writer, Director-General, UNESCO, 1946-1948.

My work with UNESCO brought home to me very forcibly how essential it is to set up efficient systems of public libraries in countries which still lack them: they are an indispensable factor in combating illiteracy and in raising the general level of education. And this in turn brought me to realise how important it is to maintain (and extend!) the public library services in the more advanced countries.

British librarians, with their knowledge of the system of public libraries in this country, were of great assistance to UNESCO in formulating its libraries policy and programme; and I hope that the arrangements made

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under the auspices of UNESCO for the pooling and co-ordination of information about libraries in all parts of the world will be of service to this country, as well as enabling its library service to play its part in the world-wide campaign for raising the level of education and informed public opinion, which is now in progress.

A Cultural Centre

C. E. M. JOAD, M.A., D.Lit.

Author, University Reader in Philosophy.

It is a far cry from 1850, when the first Public Libraries Act was passed, when to be poor almost certainly meant to be bookless even if not illiterate, to 1950, when scarcely the remotest hamlet is without its library provided by a beneficent County Council. This service varies, of course, from books made available to borrowers on two evenings a week in the local school, to the up-to-date library in a modern building and acting as a cultural centre for the district. And a cultural centre it is; it provides not only reading matter on every conceivable subject, but also house room for the local Gramophone Club, Literary Discussion Group and Art Society so that people may not only read about the subjects in which they are interested, but meet others of similar tastes.

Many of the millions of books issued in the course of a year by our Public Libraries are, no doubt, novels. This does not alter the fact that no serious student, wherever he may live and however short of money he may be, need be deprived of any book that he needs for his studies. And even the ordinary reader can benefit from the good advice which a willing and knowledgeable librarian can give him in his choice of books.

The Preservation of Standards

F. R. LEAVIS, Ph.D.

Critic, Lecturer in English, Editor of "Scrutiny."

I am honoured by the request that I should associate myself with this centenary celebration. Our librarians form one of those professional bodies the actual importance of which to the community is out of all proportion to their too modest economic claims. The country is not aware enough of its debt. And, in the nature of the case, what a critic must regard as the librarian's most important function can only be performed with unobtrusive tact. For a practising critic is continually reminded that the only effective presence of the standards to which he has to appeal must be in an educated public—such a public as the conditions of the modern world tend to enfeeble and disperse; and he knows that a librarian with a sense of vocation is—like the school teacher and the educationist in general—more than a mere mechanical agent in a process of demand and supply: he is an ally in the battle to preserve standards.

The means are a matter of professional experience and skill; an outsider must confine himself to applauding the evidence of professional pride.

A.A.L. BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

- HEWITT, A. R.** A SUMMARY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY LAW. 2nd edition, 1947. 6s. (5s. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
- PHILLIPS, W. H.** A PRIMER OF BOOK CLASSIFICATION. 2nd edition, Reprinted 1949. 8s. 6d. (7s. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
- SAYERS, W. C. B.** FIRST STEPS IN ANNOTATION IN CATALOGUES. 2nd edition, Reprinted 1948. 1s. 6d. (1s. 3d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
- SAYERS, W. C. B.** THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE. 3rd edition, 1948. 1s. 9d. (1s. 6d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
- TWaits, H. C.** A CATALOGUE OF THE A.A.L. LIBRARY. 1949. 1s. 6d. (1s. 3d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
- WALFORD, A. J., Ed.** THE A.A.L. GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS. Vol. 1. 1950. 5s. 6d. (4s. 6d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.

A.A.L. REPRINTS :

1. **Hulme, E. W.** Principles of Book Classification. 1s. 6d. (1s. 3d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
2. **Pollard, A. W.** The Arrangement of Bibliographies. 1s. (10d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
3. **Pollard, A. W. and Greg, W. W.** Some Points in Bibliographical Descriptions. 1s. (10d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.
4. **Cranshaw, J.** Cutting Cataloguing Costs 50%. 10d. (8d. to members of L.A.) Post Free.

*Obtainable from G. P. RYE, A.L.A., Public Library,
Manresa Road, S.W.3*

CASH WITH ORDERS FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, PLEASE

INDEX TO PROGRESS

The 16 mm. sound film *Index to Progress*, produced by the A.A.L. and directed by Walter F. Broome, is designed for showing to the general public and to schools. It runs for 21 minutes and may be bought for fifteen guineas or hired for fifteen shillings the first day and two shillings for each additional day, from the Hon. Treasurer, J. S. BRISTOW, A.L.A., CENTRAL LIBRARY, SOUTHAMPTON.

A.A.L. Correspondence Courses*

Correspondence Courses, conducted under the auspices of the A.A.L. (Section of the L.A.) are being arranged in the sections mentioned below. The courses comprise ten lessons, consisting of a prescribed selection of technical reading, hints and advice on study and practical work, and questions or subjects for essays upon which the Tutor will write comments or corrections.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION.—The course covers the whole of the L.A. requirements for this examination.

REGISTRATION EXAMINATION.—Group A (i) Classification and (iii) Practical Classification (Dewey only); (ii) Cataloguing and (iii) Practical Cataloguing. Group B (iv) Bibliography and Documentary Reproduction; (v) Assistance to Readers. Group V (vi) Organization and Administration. Group D (viii) History of English Literature.

FINAL EXAMINATION.—Part 1, Bibliography and Book Selection. Part 2, Library Organization and Administration: General Paper; (a) Public Libraries; (b) University and College Libraries; (c) Special Libraries and Information Bureaux. Part 3, Subject Approach to the Literature of the Arts and Sciences: (a) (iv) English and American literature and outstanding foreign literature available in English 1780-1900; (f) Literature and Librarianship of Music. Part 4 (b) Work with Young People; (c) Advanced Classification; Advanced Cataloguing; (d) Historical Bibliography.

Fee per course £2 5s. 0d. (non-members of the L.A. are charged double fees).

ENTRANCE courses are arranged to run from March to November, and from October to June of the following year.

REGISTRATION AND FINAL courses are arranged to run from April to June of the following year, and from November to December of the following year. Students wishing to enter for a course must obtain an application form and send it (together with the appropriate fee) to the Joint Hon. Education Secretaries, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24. *Applications must reach the above on or before 28th February and 30th September for the March/April and October/November courses respectively, after which dates no applications will be considered.*

Important—Before entering for a course, students are particularly advised to make themselves familiar with the regulations governing the examinations, as printed in the *Library Association Year Book*. Any queries concerning the examinations or the syllabus should be sent direct to the Library Association, and not to the Association of Assistant Librarians.

*FOR REVISION COURSES, SEE NOTE ON PAGE 117.

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A Civilising Influence

C. DAY LEWIS, B.A., F.R.S.L.

Poet and Author.

The influence of Public Libraries during the past hundred years has been incalculable, a beneficent and civilising influence. To-day they have new competitors in the field of education and mental recreation—cinema, radio, television. But none of these can take the place of books for those who seriously want to acquire knowledge or to exercise their imagination. Such people are, potentially, the intellectual élite of the country: in serving their needs, the Public Libraries will continue to encourage the most effective kind of education, which is self-education.

Sources of Stimulus and Vision

ALBERT MANSBRIDGE, C.H., M.A., LL.D., Hon. F.L.A.

Founder of the Workers' Educational Association, of the Central Library for Students (later the N.C.L.) and of the Seafarers' Education Service.

Assistant librarians are, in a real sense, tutors and advisers, who do not seek to impose their own ideas, but to satisfy the real and insistent needs of borrowers, as opportunities arise for inspiration and guidance. In the early years of the National Central Library I met many librarians and they co-operated to the full, as they—or their successors—have done in the provision of books for seafarers during the last thirty years.

Public libraries are fountains of the waters of recorded learning, stimulus and vision in English life.

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W. SOMERSET MAUGHAN, F.R.S.L., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Author.

Various distinguished persons have written in this journal on the place of libraries in the community, and they have certainly said whatever should be said on the subject; but the official journal of the Association is called *The Library Assistant*, and it is of the library assistant that I desire to speak. It is not enough that a public library should be well stocked with books, ancient and modern. Its usefulness largely depends on the librarian. His help and guidance is invaluable to readers who have an urge to read, but do not quite know how to come by the books that may satisfy it. An assistant librarian, however studious, cannot be expected to have read all the books in a library, but if he is a good librarian, he will know enough about each one, or nearly each one, to be able to help the inquirer to decide whether he cares to read it or not; and if he is a better than good librarian, he will bear in mind that reading should be an enjoyment rather than a task. He can then so guide the reader that he will acquire the habit of reading which when all is said and done is probably the most durable of all the pleasures of life.

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The Freedom of the Press

SIR FRANCIS HEYNELL, R.D.I., F.S.I.A.

Book Designer.

Note, please, that the Press Lords would have you believe that the freedom of the press is not the freedom of the printing-press, but of the Press with a capital P—the “Ha’penny Press.” But it is the Library which, housing books and pamphlets, is the truer repository of the freedom of the press. A “kept” press in the sense of newspapers is a thing far easier to establish than “kept” libraries: though Hitler had a shot at both.

Guardians of Typographical Standards

STANLEY MORISON

Typographer.

I owe all my education to Andrew Carnegie and the “open access” system, and to the readiness of librarians to answer my questions and guide my taste. And taste is not automatically improved by the extension of libraries; the recruitment of librarians is equally necessary. In my time librarians have greatly widened the range of their interests and are now equipped to distinguish books according to their typography and make-up. If any readers should fail to appreciate the importance of book production, it is not so much their fault as their loss. The library assistant bears an important responsibility here, and it is all to the good that the curriculum of training for library assistants has for some years included courses in bibliography and printing. It is by their own knowledge and discrimination that library assistants can act as a liaison between publisher and reader, and in the exercise of these qualities to enhance the dignity of their profession.

Teachers Without a Cane

RAYMOND MORTIMER

Author and Critic.

Librarians, without the help of the cane and the imposition, continue our education when we have left school. My personal debt to this profession is enormous. It is a privilege for any man of letters to express his gratitude to your calling.

A Responsibility to Music

R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS, O.M., D.Mus.

Composer.

I am very glad to see that in late years the public libraries have woken up to the importance of music as part of our general culture. Many libraries have now a good collection of music scores, but, as you yourselves know, much remains to be done.

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Astonishing Progress

LORD LINDSAY OF BIRKER, C.B.E., LL.D.

Principal, University College of North Staffordshire.

I am glad to write a few words in acknowledgement of the work done by Public Libraries. The progress they have made in spreading good reading over the country is quite astonishing.

Essential to Intellectual Life

HERBERT READ, D.S.O., M.C., D.Litt., M.A.

Author.

Libraries have become so much a part of our literary life that we take their existence for granted. We should try to imagine for a moment what our lives would have been like without libraries—our lives as students, as readers, as workers in any profession, and above all, our lives as writers. It is like trying to imagine life without an essential limb. On this occasion I would like to take the opportunity to pay my tribute to the part played by libraries in the intellectual life of the community, and above all to the part played by those who run the libraries for our benefit. The systematic efficiency with which books are classified and catalogued in our libraries is one of the great practical achievements of our time.

A Lesson from 1850

SIR STANLEY UNWIN, LL.D.

President of the Publishers' Association of Great Britain, President of the International Publishers' Congress.

We can learn from the experience of those responsible for the first Public Libraries Act that all the most important reforms and movements for the public weal are opposed at their inception; that like the sponsors of the Act, we should not allow ourselves to be intimidated by such opposition from whatever quarter it comes, but press on, content, if need be, for a later generation to benefit from our labours and to bless us as we to-day bless the founders of the Public Libraries of Great Britain.

A Contribution to the National Well-Being

J. G. WILSON, C.B.E.

Chairman, Education Board, Booksellers' Association.

During my work in the bookshop since 1889, I have never ceased to look upon the Public Library as a beneficent influence, and a stimulus to the making of personal collections. And I have continued to think of librarians as my good friends. No wonder that I rejoice in the Centenary celebrations, because I am sure the solid and enduring labours of good librarians are among the best cultural contributions to the national well-being.

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Books for Students

Walford, A. J. ed. *The A.A.L. guide to professional examinations. Volume 1—Entrance and Registration examinations, 1950 (A.A.L., 5s. 6d.), 4s. 6d. to members.*

This is a responsible book; it is one which should be bought by all students for the Entrance and Registration Examinations. That is a declaration which is made in all sobriety. The thought, work and care which have gone into its compilation are evidenced in all its pages. Dr. Walford and his associates have written one of the significant books on librarianship. It is a pity it is not better dressed and that it is denied title-page and date. As librarians we ought to be meticulous about such things.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I deals with the method of study and examination technique; Part II with the Entrance and Registration examinations subject by subject. The first part is the more fascinating because it is full of ripe wisdom. Properly understood, it will teach the student how to come to grips with his subject and warn him of the dangers of mental laziness. The writers know the difference between sound and casual knowledge; they believe that facts are the foundation of understanding; there is no room in their pages for the impressionistic half-knowledge which mixed with vague moralising is so commonly offered as a substitute for learning in the examinations. "Get your jacket off and roll up your sleeves" might serve as their text. Study is hard work. It demands application and orderliness. Skill improves with practice. If the student finds himself becoming stale, let him change his reading, not give up and go to the pictures.

There are some careful words by Mr. Enser on "In-service Training," a scheme whereby young assistants are taught their job and particularly their responsibility to the public, in a systematic way. May a doubt be expressed and the suggestion made that Mr. Enser would try to do too much too quickly? He would have the assistants taught how to cultivate "a good voice, distinct and pleasing to the ear," how to dress suitably, the function of various departments, and a "first-hand knowledge of committee procedure." He writes almost as if library systems do not have an ethos. The young assistant will copy and absorb if given time; and what matters is the example of his seniors, and that means primarily the chief. A knowledge of committee procedure may well come later; it is scarcely the kind of thing the young assistant has the background to appreciate.

Chapter 5 should be studied with the greatest care. It deals with answering examination questions. No examiner will read it (and all examiners should read it) without feeling grateful that a firm guide is now available to the student on what examiners mean when they begin their questions with such words as "discuss," "outline," "enumerate," and "list." There are some wise words on essay-writing in this chapter which might have added Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's valuable advice, that, having written an introductory paragraph, it can usually be eliminated when the essay has been written. In this way directness and terseness are achieved. Candidates cannot, of course, rewrite their essays, but Mr. MacCarthy's advice is a useful warning that most introductory paragraphs are trite and pointless.

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Mr. Corbett writes on the Entrance Examination. There is no doubt that the student who acts on his advice will pass the examination and that is justification enough for the chapter. But he seems to ask for too much. The examination is designed as a test of the suitability of the assistant for librarianship. The amount of reading prescribed is excessive. Admittedly nothing read is wasted; it may shorten the Registration journey. But to do so much in the first twelve months of library service seems likely to produce mental indigestion. There are one or two details in this chapter which call for mild question. Is the phrase "a systematically arranged inventory of the stock of a given library . . ." a sound definition of a catalogue? The word "inventory" is unhappy and, possibly, confusing. Again, "description" in cataloguing is given to mean title, editor, edition and translator. The meaning of "description" is in doubt; but it is generally understood to include collation. It is a term to be avoided. One small niggling criticism. Under the heading "Essay" on page 61: there is an excessive use of the indefinite pronoun "one" made the more noticeable by referring in the first instance to anyone entering librarianship and in the second instance to the writer of the paragraph.

The remaining chapters of the book deal with the Registration Examination. The student is properly warned to leave Library Organisation and Administration to the end and not to begin with Cataloguing and Classification. It is a pity that Mr. Adsett who writes so well on cataloguing, did not have the courage to lay out an entry as an example for all to follow. It would have removed one of the great question marks from the examination. He states on page 73, "It is true the author's name need not be repeated in the title, but the implications of rule 173 should not be overlooked." The purist conception is surely that the title should be directly copied from the title-page and should include the author as he appears on the title-page.

Mr. Halliday, Mr. Woledge and the Editor write with insight on Library Organisation and Administration, and Mr. Butcher on Bibliography. The latter has the courage to distinguish between a woodcut and a wood-engraving. It is a pity that some wood-engravers would not call themselves woodcutters, as so many of them are by his definition.

The Editor has done the chapter on the literature of the special subjects—English, Science and Social and Political Ideas: he is an excellent guide. His modesty throughout the book tends to give more credit to others than to himself. That is right and proper; but no reason for the reviewer withholding his own unstinted admiration for Dr. Walford, whose contributions are full of wisdom. He has carried the burden of the book with a light foot and a sure stride. Such criticism as appears in this review is not to be taken as belittling it. No human work is free of fault and this one has less than most; it has the added merit that it was badly needed (which cannot be said of all books on librarianship). Students have now a guide which should remove doubt and create success. They are certainly in debt to Dr. Walford and his devoted team.

F.G.B.H.

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FIRST AID FOR THE STUDENT.

Corbett, E.V. *An introduction to public librarianship* 1950. (Clarke, 15s.).
Harrison, K. C. *First steps in librarianship* 1950. (Grafton, 6s. 6d.).

The need for a textbook for entrants to the profession has long been apparent, and became more urgent with the introduction of the new examination syllabus. The publication of these two books, almost simultaneously with the new A.A.L. guide to the entrance and registration examinations, fills the gap admirably.

It is almost inevitable, when reviewing two books on almost identical subjects, to compare one with another, even though the authors have different objects in view. Mr. Harrison's book is avowedly solely intended for examination preparation, including revision questions at the end of each chapter, and numerous examination hints. The style is direct, simple and never wastes a word. Mr. Corbett's book, more than twice as long, has a rather larger end. As the preface says, "It is hoped it might prove useful to those just leaving school, who are considering the possibilities of librarianship as a career. To this end the prospects and conditions of public librarianship, the methods of study and training, and the general organisation of the public library service, have been explained at some length."

Apart from these differences, both books follow the syllabus for the Entrance examination fairly closely, differing mainly in the length of the treatment they give to each section. It would be difficult to fault either of them either for clarity or completeness except perhaps in the sections on organisation and methods. Mr. Harrison here is altogether too brief. Some of the processes are described inadequately (the Dickman charging system, and different fine records are not described at all), and there is practically no discussion or comparison of varying methods. Since the reader is unlikely to have very varied experience, the textbooks must compare and contrast. One really cannot deal with library organisation, even for the entrance examination, in 32 pages. Mr. Corbett's is much fuller, far more detailed, and prepared to discuss the "why," as well as the "how." Though even he tends at times to describe only a single method and leave it at that. While any person who attempts to hack a way for the student through the jungle of library method has my sympathy, it nevertheless has to be attempted.

In the reference section also, Mr. Corbett has, I think wisely, gone beyond the strict syllabus requirements, in discussing a fairly wide range of reference books and indicating their use.

But if Mr. Harrison keeps strictly to the syllabus, and never uses two words where one will do, it must be admitted that he packs in a remarkable amount of information. He finds space to mention county library organisation, work in a children's library, stock-taking methods, and office routine. In the cataloguing and classification sections, speaking as one who still knows remarkably little about either of these subjects, I found him clearer and easier to follow than Mr. Corbett, though of course, much less detailed.

It will be concluded that each book has its merits and its defects, as have all textbooks. In several ways they are complementary rather than competitive. But they each have several outstanding merits. They have

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both been compiled with care, written with due regard for simplicity, and they both appear at a time when they are most needed. Every student will read one of them. Wise ones will read both.

F.M.G.

JAMES REVIE

THE death of James Revie is a sad loss, not only to the Association, but to the profession as a whole. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know him as a friend will miss a great comrade. He served the A.A.L. faithfully and well, first in the Midland branch and later as a National Councillor and Officer of the Association. During the nineteen thirties when I had the privilege of serving the Association as Treasurer, Vice-President and President, I found in him a loyal friend and colleague; his advice was of the greatest value and his efficiency beyond praise. He was Honorary Secretary during the difficult and anxious period of negotiation with the Library Association on the matter of amalgamation. As a negotiator he was courteous, but firm, tenacious but reasonable, and at all times willing to see both sides of a question on which there was disagreement. Although he worked for the benefit of the profession, he was ever loyal to the A.A.L., its traditions, aims and hopes, and never failed to adhere to a point when he felt it right and proper so to do. It was a bitter disappointment to him when the proposed agreement failed to receive ratification.

He represented the A.A.L. on the Council of the Library Association, and later became a nationally elected member of that body. He was Chairman of the Membership Committee and of the Conditions of Service Committee, whose work resulted in the improvement in salaries and status of municipal librarians. During the war he was an active member of the Emergency Committee set up by the Library Association to conduct its affairs.

He never spared himself in his work for the two Associations, and the amount of time and energy he devoted, without thought of reward or personal advancement, to the interests of the profession and its members, was prodigious. It did, undoubtedly, contribute largely to the ill-health he suffered in later years. He was a Scot by birth and saw service in Glasgow, Cardiff, Birmingham and Westminster. He died at the age of 48 and our very deep sympathy is extended to his widow and son.

A. R. HEWITT.

National Service: Librarians in the R.A.E.C.

We are asked to remind members due for call-up under the National Service Acts, who wish to serve as librarians in the Royal Army Educational Corps that they must possess the educational qualification of School Certificate or its equivalent, or higher. When called up for the preliminary interview, they should express a preference for service in the R.A.E.C. If accepted, they will be required to undergo the normal basic military training and a course of instruction at the Army School of Education, at the satisfactory completion of which they will be granted the rank of Sergeant-Instructor. Further information about the R.A.E.C. may be obtained from the War Office (A.G.14), Stanmore, Middlesex.

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Library Association Conference -

Assistants Day 1950

Thursday, 21st September, is Assistants Day at the Library Association Conference in London this year. In the morning, at 10.30 a.m., the Library Association Annual Lecture will be given by Lord Lindsay of Birker, at the Central Hall, Westminster.

In the afternoon the A.A.L. session will be held at the South Hall of Victoria Halls in Bloomsbury Square. This is situated in the Liverpool Victoria Building on the east side of the square. The meeting will begin with a showing of the A.A.L. film, *Index to Progress*, at 2 p.m., and will be followed by a paper by the Honorary Secretary, Mr. E. A. Clough, entitled "On being a hundred years old." Tea will be served from 4 to 4.30 p.m. in the Hall. At 4.35 p.m., the Manchester School of Librarianship will present a dramatic sketch on the passing of the first Public Libraries Act.

An A.A.L. Dance has been arranged for the evening and will be held at Chelsea Town Hall. Admission tickets cost 3s. 6d. each, and may be obtained from Miss S. J. Mangan, Public Library, Manresa Road, Chelsea, S.W.3. Cash should accompany your application.

The A.A.L. Conference, 1951

The Association's 1951 Conference will be held at Manchester, in Ashburne Hall, a well situated residential hall of the University. Full details have yet to be worked out, but the date has been fixed for 6th to 8th April, and the subject for discussion is, provisionally, "The assistant—his recruitment, welfare and training." The conference procedure will be the same as that which proved itself so well at the 1950 London conference; members will divide into discussion groups and reassemble to formulate findings. The cost will be reasonable, and it is hoped that many library authorities will encourage their staff to attend this week-end conference and either pay their expenses or make a contribution toward them.

Among the places of interest which it is hoped may be visited during the conference are the Manchester Central Library, the John Rylands Library, the Chetham Library, and the Manchester Library Theatre.

A.A.L. Correspondence Courses

REGISTRATION REVISION COURSES.

Preliminary notice is given that it is hoped to introduce this autumn a limited number of revision courses for each section of the Registration Examination. These courses, at 45s. per course, will be reserved exclusively for students who have previously failed the subject in the Registration Examination of the Library Association. Students should note that the courses will comprise the ordinary courses arranged in five fortnightly lessons, with a special series of questions. Full details may be obtained from Mr. S. W. Martin, A.L.A., Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24.

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Local Education Authority Grants

Information is required of details of grants made or refused by Local Education Authorities to students for the purpose of attending whole-time courses at schools of librarianship. Will library assistants who have applied for such grants please inform the Secretary, Library Association, Chaucer House, Malet Place, London, W.C.1, as soon as possible, giving details in the following form. There is no need to write a letter; it will be sufficient if the question numbers are set out and the answers written against them.

- (1) Name of Education Authority.
- (2) Year for which tenable.
- (3) Course: Registration or Final.
- (4) Amount of grant.
 - (a) fees.
 - (b) maintenance.
 - (c) books.
 - (d) travelling.
- (5) Were domestic circumstances taken into account in fixing the grant?
- (6) Was a grant offered but not taken up? If so, give reasons.

Applications rejected by Local Education Authority—

- (7) Name of Education Authority.
- (8) Year for which requested.
- (9) Course: Registration or Final.
- (10) Reason, if any, for rejection.

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